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20 August 1961
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FM: General Lemnitzer, Washington

TO: General Norstad, Paris

JCS 1235-61

Exclusive for General Norstad. General Lemnitzer sends.

1. In interest of keeping you informed I am transmitting herewith memorandum from Nitze to Secretary McNamara dated 24 August 1961.

"Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense.

"SUBJECT: Berlin build-up.

"The rationale behind July decisions for restrained, gradual military strengthening seems largely invalidated by events of recent days. Soviet actions have so basically changed the situation that the July decisions appear to require fundamental reappraisal.

"In July there was only the expectation of a Berlin crisis, foreshadowed by Khrushchev's menacing words at Vienna.

..... But the Soviet Bloc has acted on an accelerating schedule, closing rapidly into infringement of Allied rights and vital interests. Yesterday's note threatens air access to Berlin for all but military personnel and thus an essential element of the freedom of the West Berliners.

"The U.S. chose to build strength at a moderate pace, to avoid provoking the Soviets and alarming Allied populations. The Soviets have quickened the pace and accused us of war-mongering nevertheless. It is unlikely that change in the pace of our build-up would bring any worse Soviet reaction. As to Allied alarm, the most likely source now is the success of Soviet belligerence to date. More rapid build-up seems now more apt to reassure than disturb Allied publics.

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